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The moral philosophy of Henry Fielding's Joseph Andrews

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ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

by

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In 1737 Henry Fielding, the satiric dramatist silenced by the Walpole government, turned his talents to the novel primarily for financial purposes. His second novel, Joseph Andrews, published in 1742 began as a continuation of the parody of Richardson's Pamela which Fielding produced in his first novel Shamela. Joseph Andrews, however, developed into a masterpiece with a singular style, realistic characterizations, a strong plot and, most important, a moral philosophy that reflected its creator's Christian and humanitarian impulses and his impatience with the follies of men and the corruptions of society.

In Joseph Andrews Fielding shows himself most closely related to the latitudinarian philosophy. The latitudinarians believed that Christian grace could only come through benevolence and good works towards one's fellow men. They rejected the strict Calvinism of the Antinomians, who saw good deeds as irrelevant to grace, and the enlightened self-interest of the Hobbesians, to whom expedience was the true measure of benevolence. Like the latitudinarians, Fielding was most outraged by the selfish and self-centered. As Fielding explained it in his famous preface to Joseph Andrews, the selfish are often the exemplars of "The Ridiculous", that quality whose source is affectation proceeding from vanity and hypocrisy. "The Ridiculous" subverts the better natures of men, makes them foolish and, in turn, is responsible for the corruption of social institutions which under different circumstances might function justly. In the novel he intends to expose "The Ridiculous" with satire, wit and condemnation.

Fielding accomplishes his purpose by creating three characters embodying Christian virtue, Parson Abraham Adams, Joseph Andrews and Fanny Goodwill and sending them on a long journey during which they encounter three groups of "The Ridiculous": treacherous acquaintances, such as the lustful and willful Lady Booby; exploitive strangers, such as the childish "roasting" squire; and greedy professional men, such as the swinish Parson Trulliber. In each encounter the three travelers react with dignity and humanity while the affected demonstrate vanity, hypocrisy and general debasement. In the novel, as a general rule, the affected are most often the rich and powerful and the self-less and benevolent are most often the poor and simple.

Two sections of the novel illustrate most clearly Fielding's philosophy and his view of his fellow man. In the coach robbing incident, at the novel's beginning, the vices and the virtues of various members of society are illustrated by their manner of response to the sufferings of a helpless fellow human. In the Wilson digression, at the novel's end, the pilgrimage of one individual from foolishness and affectation to contentment and benevolence symbolizes for Fielding the journey each individual might take.

It is the reform of the individual and society that is Fielding's major concern. As a conservative social critic he did not wish to overturn existing classes or social institutions, but he did believe that his society could be reformed. The very act of writing Joseph Andrews suggests that its author, while being realistic about the flaws of men, believed that if the desire was great reform was possible. Fielding offers no hope of earthly reward for man's reform, in fact the happy endings achieved for most of his benevolent characters seem as much the result of coincidence as destiny. He does believe, however, that a simple life of contentment, benevolence and good deeds can be lived by those who want it and is the most noble life an individual can have.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF HENRY FIELDING'S JOSEPH ANDREWS

CHAPTER I • INTRODUCTION

The eighteenth century in England was a period of change, development and readjustment on all levels of society. What made it different from previous centuries in which dislocations had occurred was the introduction of industrialization which, in the long run, would have as profound an effect on governments, social institutions and demography, as a great war or natural disaster. During the period of Henry Fielding's life, 1707-1754, manipulators from many segments of society schemed for power, governments collapsed and England's treasured institutions trembled and often convulsed. To the moral and sensitive mind of one like Henry Fielding, it was not difficult to understand that such institutions were buffeted by uncontrollable exterior forces and further weakened internally by corrupt individuals whose primary consideration was self-gratification and who often showed a vicious unconcern for justice and public and private good. Despite his very strong feelings and natural satiric bent, verified on the London stage between 1730 and 1737, every biographical indication suggests that economic necessity rather than outrage at injustice was Fielding's primary motivating force for writing. Whatever the reasons for his doing this, Fielding could not ignore the state of life in his country, could not pander to public sentimentality and could not lie to himself about what had to be said in his work. Among other things Joseph Andrews reflects the intellectual honesty of its author.

Certain forces within the artist drove him to be honest with society as he was honest with himself. Although 1742, the year of Joseph Andrews' publication, was not the most momentous one of the century, there were enough public and private troubles to warrant the circulation of a work devoted to the improvement of men and their society.

Ironically enough, it was the development of the novelistic form itself which gave Fielding the medium through which he was to develop his great artistic power. Although Fielding wrote more plays than novels, it is the novels that made his literary reputation; the plays are for the most part forgotten today. The novel came to maturity during the eighteenth century when Defoe, Richardson and other writers gave it breadth and substance. But it was Fielding, above all, who elevated the novel artistically. Fielding was forced out of the theater in 1737 when Walpole initiated the Theatrical Licensing Act in response to Fielding's satirical attacks upon him. He may have turned to the novel because its unique structure enabled him to fully develop characterization, plot and moral philosophy. He was also motivated by a need for money and by jealousy of Richardson's great success. Fielding thought Richardson plodding and intellectually inferior and found Pamela mawkish, contrived and indecent. Fielding's first two works, Shamela and Joseph Andrews, were written in answer to Pamela as parodies which would expose the sham and pretense of Richardson's work. In the case of Shamela, Fielding's limited purpose was fulfilled, but as he created Joseph Andrews, the complexity of plot, the variety and depth of characterization and the profundity of moral philosophy elevated the work above mere parody. The very scope of the material produced Fielding's first great novel.

Joseph Andrews is many things, but above all it is humorous, and if the novel is to be understood the nature and the substance of this humor must also be understood, for behind it lies a powerful philosophical vision. Joseph Andrews has been recognized as a thoroughly moral book that almost demands thoughtful study, and it is through comedy that this morality is emphasized and illuminated.[1] Perhaps Fielding turned to comedy as his medium in the novel as the natural successor to the dramatic satire he used in the theater. Whatever his reasons for using it, comedy in Joseph Andrews reinforces the serious intent of the work. As Elizabeth Jenkins has expressed it: "Fielding is a great comic writer, [and] the impression he gives us is deeply serious."[2] The basic seriousness of Fielding's outlook, within the comic context, leads directly to a question about his attitude toward the world and the society in which he lived. Fielding was an individual who could identify clearly the corruption and injustice in the world and who also believed that men and institutions could be bettered.

His biographers and his works themselves portray him as a man with few illusions about life. Yet he did have his own vision of what life might be like in society and attempted to realize that vision actively as a political gadfly and later as a circuit riding magistrate. His involvement in politics, exercised through dramatic satire and pamphleteering, was not without its dangers, and in 1737 it was responsible for ending his career as a dramatist.

There is strong evidence to indicate that Fielding's humanitarian attitude could be traced to lucid and resolute beliefs that the author worked into Joseph Andrews with wit and inventiveness. As a creative man -- a man of thought and action -- Fielding had done his own share

of spiritual searching. The result of this quest, according to a study done by Martin C. Battestin, was a strong attraction to the beliefs advanced by the latitudinarians. Such men as Isaac Barrow, John Tillotson, Samuel Clarke and Benjamin Hoadly believed in and preached a pragmatic, common-sense Christianity which had at its base good works.[3] The attitude of the latitudinarians toward dissenters was much more mild and tolerant than the attitudes of many contemporary Christians. Also, they looked to basic Christianity individually interpreted rather than to lofty pronouncements of an ecclesiastical hierarchy for their guiding principles. Their beliefs were a mean, perhaps a "golden mean", between two extreme attitudes that were popular at the time. In Joseph Andrews the author delineates these attitudes in no uncertain terms. On the one side were various Calvinists, particularly those known as Antinomians, who were zealous Christians but who rejected the notion that charity and good works were the responsibility of the true believer. To such individuals, God's grace could not be earned but was given freely or not at all. There was no religious pressure on the Antinomians to engage in humanitarian acts, and, in fact, some believed that benevolence was actually a hindrance to salvation, while others felt that any action committed or performed by the elect could not be sinful, cruel, or dishonest even though it might appear that way because in the sight of God it was good. This attitude of indifference to the suffering of others is succinctly and appropriately articulated in Joseph Andrews when Mrs. Tow-wouse exclaims: "Common charity, a f--t!"[4] At the other extreme were the pessimistic ideas of men such as Swift, Hobbes, Mandeville and LaRouchefoucauld, who thought of man as ignoble,

self-loving and only motivated to do good in the spirit of enlightened self-interest. Such Hobbesian pessimism revolted the latitudinarians, who saw themselves as being down-to-earth and as realistic as others, but felt graced with optimism and the belief that man was put on earth to do the good works of God. Good deeds to them were not crosses to be borne with stoic endurance, but rather opportunities for good that were to be embraced. The latitudinarians stressed the perfectibility of the soul and reacted against the moral cynicism of Hobbes, the strict rationalism of the neo-stoics and the Antinomianism of the Calvinists. They believed that faith was not enough, that, in the end, men would be judged by the lives they led and that charity and benevolence were binding responsibilities on the true Christian. Only through good works could man demonstrate the essential goodness of human nature and achieve salvation.[5] In essence, the expression of the latitudinarian belief was

> "...(1) an active, universal benevolence; (2) its motivation was in [the] sympathetic emotions of compassion and pity; (3) its source was the natural goodness of the heart [and its reward was the] (4) self approving joy that is the personal recompensation for the good man's labors in behalf of others."[6]

The philosophical outlook in Joseph Andrews encompasses the latitudinarian commitment to good works and a Christian acceptance of the universe as benevolent and ordered; one in which good ultimately will be rewarded and evil ultimately will be punished. By the use of a variety of characters and situations in Joseph Andrews, Fielding presents a representative sampling of the moral attitudes and religious beliefs in eighteenth century life. At the end of the work there is resolution; things make sense and have meaning, and the resolution provides confir-

mation of Fielding's attraction to latitudinarian ideals.

Little evidence suggests that Fielding embraced the latitudinarian ideals formally; instead he lived these ideals, or tried to live them, through a life devoted to benevolence and justice. His work as social critic and magistrate give ample proof of his involvement in the life of his times. This was, however, involvement of a very traditional nature. Fielding was interested in improving the existing society rather than overturning it. He was not a revolutionary; he did not wish to tear down and rebuild. What he wanted to do was strengthen and reform the existing structures of society. Fielding wanted his fellow man to be benevolent and the institutions of society to be just. To Fielding, these institutions were basically good; it was men that corrupted and ruined them. If men could only learn to face themselves and each other with honesty, the quality of life would be better for all. Joseph Andrews with its frank view of mankind, provides one means by which man can see himself as he really is and begin to understand.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine Joseph Andrews in the areas of characterization, structure, philosophy and style, to determine the origins of the flaws Fielding found in society, to delineate in detail the virtues and ideals advanced by the author and already alluded to in this introduction and to outline that process through which the author believed life might be improved.

Chapter II The Nature and Source of the Ridiculous

Men exhibit many flaws. In the eighteenth century, flaws in personal conduct were viewed as weaknesses that could be strengthened through private recognition and then the exercise of the will. In the eighteenth century it was believed that if man could learn to understand the fixed physical laws that governed his mechanically organized universe and apply these laws to his own existence he could strengthen his weaknesses and lead a happy tranquil life. The multiplicity of social critics of the time saw as their duty the identification of human error and the instruction of methods for reform. These social critics were convinced that they had achieved a good understanding of man's position and responsibility in the universe and his society. The Tatler and Spectator, the Isaac Bickerstaff papers and many other works were dedicated to improving man's conduct and social relationships. Although newspapers and pamphlets were the chief vehicles of social criticism, the moral lesson was also to be found in works of fiction, especially the plays and novels of Henry Fielding.

Philosophically, Fielding appears to be very close to his contemporaries, and his keen sense of observation, inventive wit and literary talent enabled him to produce art that was socially critical and social criticism that was artistic. For Fielding, mens' imperfections were identified as "The Ridiculous", that quality which subverted the better nature in men, made them foolish and, in turn, was responsible for the corruption of society's institutions. The impli-

cation behind the social criticism in Joseph Andrews is that if men could come to realize how their weaknesses degraded them and polluted their institutions they might reform. In the novel, there is little criticism of institutions per se; Fielding, after all, was a conservative critic. He did not wish to destroy existing structures. But he did believe that if man could recognize "The Ridiculous" in himself and exercise his will against it his life would be pleasing and harmonious.

In his preface to Joseph Andrews, Fielding explains that he intends to expose "The Ridiculous" and identify its origins and results. For the author, "The Ridiculous" has its source in "affectation" proceeding from "one of these two causes, vanity or hypocrisy: for as vanity puts us on affecting false characters, in order to purchase applause; so hypocrisy sets us on an endeavor to avoid censure, by concealing our vices under an appearance of their opposite virtues" (p. 10). "The Ridiculous" makes men asses and dolts but not villains. The author stipulates that his main interest focuses on "The Ridiculous" and that he neither intends to jeer the "blackest villainies" and "the most dreadful calamities" nor to deride "imperfections of nature, ... ugliness, infirmity, or poverty, ...but when ugliness aims at the applause of beauty, or lameness endeavors to display agility," he cannot help but find them amusing (p. 11). Fielding was basically a sympathetic man, repelled by misery and suffering, yet he could not help laughing if the sufferer made himself preposterous. In the novel itself, when the infirm and the ugly are held up to ridicule it is only because they are pretending to be what they are not. The same is true for all the hypocritical and vain. Fielding will always take them to task for their deceit. His instrument of chastisement is

satire, and it is an instrument he uses with facility. Even though the author's satire is biting and pungent it rarely seems bitter or despairing. There is a sense of resolution in Joseph Andrews, a sense that in the final reckoning the innate justice in the universe will prevail. It may be this sense that allows Fielding to sympathize with the sufferer and deride the pretentious.

Although Fielding takes pains to explain his ideas concerning "The Ridiculous", there are those who question the author's powers of definition. F. Homes Dudden believes that this theory is inadequate because it is too restrictive since "affectation is not the only source of the ridiculous" and the author never really succeeds in proving this theory with the material in the novel.[1] A similar but more sympathetic criticism is expressed by G. M. Godden and from an entirely different angle. Godden believes that the theory of "The Ridiculous" is inadequate to this work because of Fielding's great creative powers. To Godden, "the force of /the author's _7 genius, the depth of his insight, the depth of his detestations and affections, soon carried him far beyond any mere study in the ridicule of vain and hypocritical affectation."[2] To a certain extent these critics are correct. Taken at face value "The Ridiculous" and its sources seem no more than a convenient starting point from which to begin in attempting to comprehend the complexity of Fielding's characterizations. Also, the fact that affectation was a popular target for social criticism at the time makes the author's interest in it seem commonplace. However, it is neither the superficial indications of affectation nor its topicality that are important but rather the moral, religious and psychological ramification that lie behind vanity and hypocrisy that give "The Ridiculous" substance and meaning. The preface to Joseph

Andrews can only suggest how deeply significant Fielding's theory is to the novel.

There is a continual moral conflict in Joseph Andrews between the vain and hypocritical and the benevolent and kind. By satirizing the base and ennobling the good, Fielding intends to instruct mankind about the foolishness of affectation and the superiority of benevolence and its eventual triumph.[3] Men should make themselves wise instead of foolish, and Fielding suggests that such a transformation is possible in a world where God is just and the social structure basically sound, if somewhat polluted by base individuals. Battestin affirms this view of the novel and sees its universal moral significance worked out in "two distinct layers that function concomitantly: a thesis attacking vice and folly, and an antithesis comprizing a positive ethical alternative, the standard against which the satirized are measured and judged."[4] The thesis and antithesis in the novel is deliniated in sharp detail. Fielding sends Joseph Andrews, Abraham Adams, Fanny Goodwill and other virtuous characters journeying through the novel and sets against them a variety of vain and hypocritical characters. It is through numerous confrontations between the two groups that the meaning and implications of "The Ridiculous" can be understood.

Allied to the moral significance of affectation is a religious significance. An individual's vanity or hypocrisy might very well prevent him from attaining his true Christian condition. This Christian condition is a spiritual state achieved voluntarily and independently. It is not a balance sheet on which are listed all of one's good deeds but rather a state achieved during a life devoted to benevolence and the search for spiritual perfection. The true Christian might sometimes be troubled by affectation -- only a saint could be completely

free of it -- but he would always remain aware of his weaknesses and continue his search toward complete intellectual honesty. In this novel, the search becomes more than a purely mental process; it takes place in the individual's encounter with his fellow man. It is characterized by good deeds, a love of humanity and a belief in the ultimate triumph of good on earth and in heaven.

Although Fielding wrote before Freud had identified the subconscious, the author had an intuitive understanding of human psychology. It is probably for this reason that Morris Golden believes that the major psychological patterns in Fielding's theory of "The Ridiculous" can be identified and explained. To that end, this critic has written an entire study of the psychological foundations supporting Fielding's work. He sees deception, a neurotic symptom, as the real source of affectation. Vanity has behind it self-deception, and hypocrisy has behind it the attempt to deceive others about oneself.[5] Deception is a dangerous and potentially destructive psychological disorder because it presents an entirely different picture of circumstances than really exist. Consequently, the good may appear evil and evil good; wisdom may change places with foolishness and beauty with ugliness. This is precisely what happens in the novel, and the result is the subversion of justice and the corruption of a society that has the potential of great good. For the individual enmeshed in vanity, hypocrisy or both, there is another more serious result. Golden has identified this condition as a behaviorist phenomenon that can be best described as "psychological enclosure." "Psychological enclosure" comes as a consequence of preoccupation with self, results in a blockage in human communication and leads to the alienation of man from his fellow man.[6] For such a man, reaching out and giving is

impossible. In Joseph Andrews instances of "psychological enclosure" are grave, repulsive or amusing. The antics of Mrs. Slipslop, Beau Didapper, Lawyer Scout, Parson Trulliber and even Lady Booby herself, evoke a variety of emotional reactions and their foolishness is the direct consequence of an excessive preoccupation with self and resulting alienation from mankind. But behind even the most hilarious incidents in the novel, for instance the bedroom farce that concludes the novel's final book, stands the idea that affectation confuses the moral sense, corrupts justice, impedes man's religious progress, encourages deceit and, in general, reduces the individual's humanity and alienates him from others.

The starting point and the end result of Fielding's creative ability is his moral vision which is best understood in terms of the author's theory of "The Ridiculous" and the characters who exemplify it. Behind the laughter that these characters evoke is the continuing moral struggle of virtue pitted against vice and wisdom pitted against foolishness. Glen W. Hatfield believes that from this moral struggle comes the novel's significance, a definition of virtue, which he sees "as the expression, in the active form of charity, of instinctive good nature, and the assumption is that this active virtue, though it may not be rewarded in the ... material sense, is sufficient unto itself and its own reward."[7] According to Aurelien Digeon, Fielding delineates a moral confrontation and paints the vain and hypocritical in the "darkest colors" because his novel is really "a plea on behalf of the poor ... of the simple and innocent ... who are crushed by the world."[8] Battestin sees the novel as more than merely a plea, he sees the conflict leading to a triumph of virtue indicating that in the final analysis "a good heart [takes] the place of prowess with the sword."[9] Fielding's

theory of "The Ridiculous" describes the negative aspects of man's conduct in society; according to Battestin these aspects are balanced by positive aspects worked out in the novel in four different ways:

> (1) [Through] the depiction of the good man as hero; (2) the notion that the sum of his goodness is chastity (or virtue, or temperance, the control of reason over the passions) with respect to himself, and charity with respect to society; (3) the choice of Joseph and his rejection of Patiphor's wife to exemplify the former, and of the pilgrim patriarch Abraham, the epitome of human faith expressed in works, to represent the latter; and (4) the analogy of the good man's life, in a world of vanity and vexation, to a pilgrimage through strange lands to his true home.[10]

In their pilgrimage toward home and happiness, Joseph Andrews and Parson Abraham Adams give frequent evidence of benevolence and charity, even though they are continually victimized by the selfish and the vicious. It is through this difficult and often disrupted search for fulfillment that the reader comes to understand the gulf that separates the affected from the charitable. The author has made his purpose intelligible by fashioning this spiritual trek, an Odyssey from "vanity and vice to virtue and contentment."[11]

What makes Joseph Andrews especially attractive, entertaining and meaningful is a cast of extraordinary characters who take on a flesh and blood reality all their own. It is these characters, breathed into life by Fielding's artistry, and the things they do and say, that communicate Fielding's conception of "The Ridiculous" and his belief in benevolence with far more intensity, precision and, of course, humor than any preface or essay ever could.

Chapter III Exemplars of "The Ridiculous"

> I solemnly protest, I have no intention to vilify or asperse anyone; for though everything is copied from the book of nature and scarce a character of action produced which I have not taken from my own observations and experience; yet I have used the utmost care to obscure the persons by such different circumstances, degrees, and colours, that it will be impossible to guess at them with any degree of certainty. . . (p. 12).

Fielding's solemn pledge concerning the benevolence and disinterestedness of his motives and the anonymity of his sources cannot be accepted without question. Critical studies have identified living or literary antecedents for many of the major and minor characters in Joseph Andrews. And as to Fielding's beneficent intentions, while he makes no personal attacks through his characters, those elements in the novel reminiscent of Pamela were created, in part, to ridicule it.

However distorted are portions of his solemn protestation in the introduction to Joseph Andrews, Fielding does copy from the "book of nature" as he understands and defines it. For many of his critics the author's creations ring true. Maurice Johnson, for instance, finds in Fielding's characters the entertainingly recognizable behavior of people as social beings.[1] F. O. Bissell appraises Fielding as a social biographer who probes deeply into the souls of men and who accurately portrays human character.[2] Dudden sees the novel as an accurate and "realistic picture of the English country-side in the first half of the eighteenth century."[3] And Hiram K. Banerji believes that "throughout the novel (Fielding) never allows himself to lose touch with the realities of life," and as a result he portrays "English life with a vividness with which it had never been pictured before."[4] In sum,

what Fielding did was to bring a new dimension of realism and creativity to his portrayal of character and setting. And Godden may be closest to the truth when he contends that Fielding's characters are "flesh and blood."[5]

This does not for a moment suggest that all those who populate the pages of Joseph Andrews are perfect specimens of human reality. It may be true that Fielding attempted to portray the ordinary men and women of the times, but Banerji's insistence that the author "had little use for that which was abnormal, grotesque or unnatural" simply belies that which Fielding himself says in his introduction.[6] Fielding's reality is different from that which appeared in the nineteenth century naturalistic novel; Fielding is not a disinterested scientific observer; he is a committed social critic. He used bizarre, Hogarthian caricatures such as the bovine Mrs. Slipslop, the shriveled Beau Didapper and the swinish Mr. Trulliber to exemplify real distortions of character in his society. The society in Joseph Andrews is not the by-product of social science but Fielding's society, as he sees it, in microcosm.

Joseph Andrews grew into a fully developed, independent artistic work from a parody of Pamela. Fielding had already completed one successful parody, Shamela, but in this new work characters that were related to Richardson's creations took on a life of their own. Of these characters the affected have special importance because they so well exemplify their creator's ideas concerning error and foolishness. Among those who have tried to interpret the affected and affectation is Wilbur Cross, who believes that moral blindness sits at the very heart

of affectation. He sees the affected "bent on transforming themselves from what nature intended into something else."[7] Such a transformation occurs when the individual refuses to face the truth and face himself. Under such circumstances men are cut off from their better selves. Cross's implication, then, is that vanity and hypocrisy are unnatural conditions. This would place the blame for the corruption of men on the complex social interrelationships that develop as civilizations develop. This theory runs counter to Fielding's belief in the basic soundness of social institutions, although it would tend to substantiate the fact that in the novel corruption is generally to be found more often in those of higher class, better education and more sophistication, and goodness more often in the simple and unaffected. Much as Fielding finds that there is ultimate justice in the universe, so Cross finds that the vain and hypocritical "in the end . . . all betray themselves."[8] Of the entire group, some are punished by being exposed to the world as frauds and having their elaborate plans foiled, others, ironically, by being forced to remain what they are.

The variety of characters who exemplify "The Ridiculous" in the novel represent every class present in English society at the time. As a result they can be grouped in many different logical ways, all such groupings, arbitrary though they may be, aiding in the definition of affectation. In the following discussion affectation will be set forth by demonstrating how the affected react with or against the exemplars of goodness: Parson Adams, Joseph Andrews and Fanny Goodwill. For convenience sake, the affected will be discussed in three groups: "trustworthy" acquaintances of the virtuous protagonists, inhumane

strangers whom the protagonists meet on their journey and callous professional men who victimize the protagonists.

I

Cross has accurately observed that Fielding "has rather excelled in his portraits of people in whom the common virtues have suffered considerably from want of exercise -- of people whom the world has rendered selfish instead of kind and generous. They are not outright bad, but any good qualities which they may have can hardly be awakened except by an appeal to selfish motives."[9] Lady Booby, the central antagonist in the work, typifies Cross's statement. She is the most carefully delineated of the affected characters in the novel, plays an important part in advancing the plot, controls or influences the lives of many characters and is most dangerous when her will is thwarted because of her power and authority. It is Lady Booby's fury that sends Joseph journeying at the novel's beginning and her lust that complicates and confuses relationships at its end. As a titled member of society, her powers carry grave responsibilities, but her affectation causes her to use these powers to bully and compel.

Lady Booby is afflicted by vanity and lust. Although the victim of an unhappy marriage and some of the natural ravages of middle age, she has convinced herself that her charm and beauty can win the love of her reluctant footboy. When he was seventeen years of age, Joseph Andrews was brought in "from the stable to attend on his lady, to go on her errands, stand behind her chair, wait at her tea-table, and carry her prayer-book to church" (p. 16), and because she has lavished attention on him, to the scandal of peers such as Lady Tittle and Lady

Tattle, Lady Booby believes she deserves Joseph's love in return. After the unexpected death of her husband and an extraordinarily brief period of mourning, Lady Booby attempts to consummate her relationship with her footboy. Although Joseph is tempted by his mistress, half-naked in bed, he manages to resist her blatant advances; this rejection sends her into paroxysms of rage and eventually leads to his expulsion from service. Her reaction comes because each character flaw feeds upon the other. Her lust has been frustrated, and her vanity has been badly damaged. Since she is used to getting her way because of her position in society, her sense of authority has also been shaken. Golden believes that Lady Booby is inclined to coercive conduct because "the noble and the rich, too often (letting their responsibilities lapse under the general cascade of luxury), tend to wallow within self-enclosed privileges, reducing their inferiors to things and overwhelming their country's laws."[10]

As a result of her vanity and lust, Lady Booby sees people as objects to be manipulated rather than fellow human beings to be respected. Because of the stratified social order of which she is a part, she can use her position and wealth to tyrannize others with impunity. When Joseph excites her lust, Lady Booby propositions him, coyly at first and then brazenly. To her offer of the "'highest favour in her power'" (p. 32), Joseph responds with concern over his virtue. Her outraged retort suggests that his refusal has shaken the foundations of her social position, amplified her sexual frustration but, worst of all, wounded her vanity. She will not accept rejection from her footboy. Since Lady Booby's primary interest is to satisfy her lust, she cannot

understand why anyone, especially a footboy, would not concur. And even considering the strict lessons Joseph has received from Parson Adams, his concern with virtue seems peculiar, obsessive and absurd, especially since it has led to Joseph's expulsion and impoverishment. Because of his love and total devotion to Fanny Goodwill, Joseph sacrifices his position and future instead of his virtue. Throughout the story, Lady Booby sees but fails to understand Joseph's total devotion to Fanny. His stubbornness frustrates her lust and infuriates her. In no way does Lady Booby communicate with Joseph or allow herself to understand what he desires.[11] Because she is a victim of affectation, she is capable of neither sympathy nor mercy and sends Joseph on his way. This action is cruel, but there is strong evidence to indicate that she is motivated by a desire to get the boy out of her sight and mind as well as punish him. When the convolutions of the plot bring Joseph back into Lady Booby's presence, all her weaknesses and compulsions rise to the surface. Although her affectation causes her to victimize many, she is the most pathetic victim of all. She is at once unable to get this nagging infatuation out of her mind and unable to act with the resolve that is her social prerogative. This emotional confusion is delineated in a rambling, hysterical monologue in which Lady Booby admits to her uncontrollable feelings and berates herself for her weaknesses. She cries, "'What am I doing? How do I suffer this passion to creep imperceptibly upon me?'". At one point she muses that life with Joseph would "'satisfy every appetite, every desire,'" but later she insists that she despises and detests her passions and will "'tear his image from /her/ bosom, tread on him,

spurn him'" (p. 282). It is the conflict between social pride and sexual passion that leaves Lady Booby a wracked and bedeviled creature and causes her to raise havoc with those who will not fulfill her demands.

Once she has resolved to destroy the marriage of Joseph and Fanny, Lady Booby uses great energy to cajole, bully and manipulate those who might further her plan. Although Lady Booby is a woman of spirit and intelligence, it seems clear that she feels that Joseph will be hers or no one's. During this difficult period, Lady Booby is seized by a conflict between common sense and desire. She realizes how selfish and absurd are her obsessions, but being the helpless victim of affectation, she cannot control them.[12]

Fielding developed in Lady Booby the worst qualities of her class. By delineating a figure combining vanity, lust and power, Fielding hoped to attack the corruption of a group who should have set a good example for the rest of society, but did not. Fielding might have reinforced this impression by leaving Lady Booby a one dimensional stereotype, but in doing so he would not have been true to his art. Instead he developed a full blown, flesh and blood characterization. Her laughter at the discovery of Slipslop and Adams in bed together and her pathetic, passionate soliloquy before Joseph's marriage are but two examples of this full dimensional characterization. Fielding created Lady Booby a woman, and her destructive impulses are not the result of an anger of "terrible malignity" as Banerji describes them but rather the passionate frustrations of a woman who has been scorned.[13]

Mrs. Slipslop, Lady Booby's servant, is a foil to her mistress and a preposterous object of hilarity herself. In the words of Dudden, she is one of Fielding's most skillful creations, with her mind "a curious compound of ignorance, vulgarity, and vanity."[14] In order to emphasize the peculiar nature of Mrs. Slipslop's character, Fielding has made her a grotesque and ridiculous figure, Hiiam Banerji notwithstanding. At the age of forty-five this gentlewoman "was not at this time remarkably handsome; being very short, and rather too corpulent in body, and somewhat red, with the addition of pimples in the face. Her nose was likewise rather too large, and her eyes too little; nor did she resemble a cow so much in her breath, as in two brown globes which she carried before her; one of her legs was also a little shorter than the other, which occasioned her to limp as she walked" (p. 25). Although the physical contrast between Slipslop and her mistress is great, they are similar in their personal vanity and their lust for Joseph. Slipslop is a "maid" who having slipped only once when she was young, now feels she can "pay off the debt of pleasure" she owes herself by indulging "in any liberties with a man, without the danger of bringing a third person into the world to betray them" (p. 25). Her designs on Joseph, for all their fatuity, are completely serious. She is so totally unaware of her own repulsive person, that she actually believes allurement and cajolery will bring Joseph into her arms. Unable to be truthful with herself about herself, she also has a distorted view of the world. Fielding is not ridiculing Slipslop for her ugliness, which after all is the product of nature's ravages, but rather for "ugliness [aiming] at the applause of beauty" (p. 11).

The monstrous nature of Slipslop's body is an extension of her character, which is self-loving, petty, cruel, selfish and lustful in the crudest way. When she comes to understand that Joseph will have no part of her, she turns her energies to finding any man she can, finally succeeding with Lawyer Scout. Slipslop and Scout are well matched. Their attitude toward others and their view of life is similar. Fielding demonstrates through these characters that baseness seeks its counterpart.

Slipslop's lewdness and her obscene pretensions to sensuality stand as a "fun-house" mirror image of the lechery of Lady Booby. The servant's bawdiness illuminates and caricatures the mistress's. Slipslop's lusts are also more clearly comic than Lady Booby's, because she is so grotesque, is a threat to no one and is a member of the lower classes. Slipslop's indiscretions are far less serious than Lady Booby's. As a conservative social critic, Fielding expected the upper classes to set the example for the lower classes, expected rectitude and integrity from them because of their superior position, saw in their corruption a greater danger of social disruption, and simply took them more seriously than he did the lower classes.[15] A good deal of the comedy emanating from Slipslop's lust results from the pure irony of what Mark Spilka calls vice attempting to pass itself off as virtue.[16] This is especially evident in Chapter XIV of Book IV when Slipslop responds to the naked presence of Parson Adams in her bed by crying out to Lady Booby, "I am ravished'" (p. 287), only "to move with much courtesy towards him" (p. 288) when Lady Booby leaves the room. In all she does, Mrs. Slipslop is pathetic and absurd. Her

murder of the English language is a study in itself and a testament to vanity grown out of ignorance. Her transparent pretensions to virtue, rude romantic posturings and ill-concealed lusts serve, at once, as a source of laughter and an admonition on the wretchedness of affectation. Slipslop is probably the most purely grotesque and purely comic character in the novel.

Less comic and more culpable than Slipslop because of his shrewdness is Peter Pounce, Lady Booby's steward. Pounce is also affected by a mixture of vanity and hypocrisy, but in his case the object of his covetousness is wealth rather than sex. Pounce's problem might be lessened if greed was his only vice; instead he is caught within a trap of his own making. As Dudden has recognized it, the conflict within Pounce exists between "miserly meanness and the desire to be looked up to as a person of affluence and importance."[17] This contradiction surfaces when Pounce is identified as being wealthy. Fearing borrowers and supplicants, he denies the possession of riches; however, when he is labeled poor he boasts of what he has. Unable to resolve this contradiction, he will be plagued with it as long as greed rules his life. Greed drives him to seek more wealth, more than he could ever need or use. Since there is no upper limit to his wants, he is driven to lying and hypocrisy in getting more. He is constantly misrepresenting his affluence either to boast or whine, as the situation presents itself. But despite what he says, none of what he has is ever shared with others.

Pounce's greed, deception and want of generosity are divulged in a rather revealing philosophical discourse he has with Abraham Adams.

In this discussion the Parson attempts to explain the philanthropic obligation for the true Christian: "Riches without charity were nothing worth; for that they were a blessing only to him who made them a blessing to others" (p. 233). Being dishonest with himself about his greed, Pounce feels threatened and called upon to defend himself. He dismisses Adams' arguments out of hand and explains that the word charity has "'a mean parson-like quality'" which he finds distasteful because it does not befit a "gentleman". As for the common evils of poverty and suffering, Pounce does not believe they exist: "'How can any man complain of hunger in a country where such excellent salads are to be gathered in almost every field? . . . And as for cold and nakedness, they are evils introduced by luxury and custom. A man naturally wants clothes no more than a horse or any other animal . . . " (p. 233). To Adams' explanation that "'Charity is a generous disposition to relieve the distressed'", Pounce responds that he agrees because to him disposition "'does not so much consist in the act as in the disposition to do it,'" and besides "'the distresses of mankind are mostly imaginary, and it would be rather folly than goodness to relieve them'" (p. 233). Although Pounce sees no need for charity he is willing to entertain all the good intentions of the philanthropist as long as he does not part with any of his money.[18] At first, Parson Adams reacts with reasoned arguments to the steward's sophistries and hypocrisies, but in the face of such conspicuous dishonesty, the anger rises within him and he leaps out of the moving coach to be rid of the sight of Pounce. This leap, in effect, is a judgment on Pounde's moral degradation. Pounce's treasure and his boasts of gain cannot move

move Adams; he is impressed by neither wealth nor power, only the good deeds that men do.

Pounce has at least one good deed to his credit. He saves Fanny as she is being carried off by the "roasting" squire's men. This rescue makes all the more curious Cross's contention that Pounce has an "ineffectual lust for young women."[19] It is difficult to recognize such an inclination, if it exists, because it is subverted by the steward's greed, just as his good qualities, evidenced by the rescue, are subverted by his insatiable desire for gain. Pounce is unable to face his profound moral failure in life because he amassed his fortune through "concealed dishonesty and extortionate usury."[20] Enclosed within the prison of his own greed, estranged from his fellow man and, for the most part, unsympathetic toward him, Pounce's sin and punishment are the same -- moral blindness and alienation.

The self-centeredness and cold indifference that can be seen in the personality of Peter Pounce is much in evidence in the character of Pamela Booby, Joseph's sister and the wife of Lady Booby's nephew. Like Pounce, Pamela has risen from mean circumstances, has forgotten the nature of her beginnings and has become contemptuous of those for whom life is a struggle. Like many others in the novel, Pamela Booby is a hypocrite because she "conceals the snobbish pride of the parvenu beneath an affected gratitude and sense of duty."[21] In Pamela's case, Fielding has focused on a special kind of hypocrite, one that has lately and tenuously arrived at social position and must go to extremes to prove her worth. Despite her marriage to Mr. Booby, Pamela is unsure of her station, and the intended wedding of Joseph to Fanny, a girl

from similar simple beginnings, unsettles her. Pamela's only object is to be rid of Fanny, and this intent coincides with the desires of her aunt by marriage, Lady Booby.

Fielding's delineation of Pamela is heavy with ridicule because "he reserved his special scorn for the arrivists, the persons eagerly on the make or those who on the other hand are desperately holding on to a greater share of gentility than the situation merits."[22] In order to get the weight of authority behind her disapproval of Fanny, Pamela gets Mr. Booby to admonish Joseph by telling him: "'I must insist upon it, that, if you have any value for my alliance or my friendship, you will decline any thoughts of engaging farther with a girl who is, as you are a relation of mine, so much beneath you'" (p. 258). Having the stubbornness of a man in love, Joseph reminds Pamela that Fanny is her equal, only to be told by his callous sister: "I am now this gentleman's lady, and as such am above her" (p. 259). For Fielding, Pamela Booby is like Richardson's heroine carried to a sophisticated extreme. In Fielding's view, both Pamelas have used sex to achieve position and wealth. Pamela Booby knows that this tack can work and is convinced that her brother might benefit from her experience. There is a cynical sincerity in the way Pamela wishes to help her brother. She is convinced that Joseph shares her base standards. Ronald Paulson has described such self-deception as a "Pamelian formula for success" in which the object is to "appear virtuous and act viciously . . . . Neither vice nor virtue can finally succeed, only pseudo-virtue".[23]

Unfortunately for the impace of the portrayal of Pamela, Fielding dilutes the satire somewhat by erasing her main objection to Fanny's

status. By making Fanny the Andrews' natural daughter at the novel's end, thus raising her social standing, Fielding demonstrates his conservative bias, and gives a measure of credibility to Pamela's disapproval. Pamela has become a hollow, selfish snob corrupted by wealth and her own vanity. She is more aristocratic than the aristocrats and can no longer feel for her brother or someone from similar circumstances. Douglas Brooks sees her grossness symbolized by her laughter in church, at the novel's end, and identifies this laughter as a rejection of the morality and values embodied in the lives of Joseph and Fanny.[24]

Along with Pamela, Lady Booby has another weapon, Beau Didapper, to thwart the marriage of Joseph and Fanny. The fact that Lady Booby feels called upon to use the services of this sorry specimen is further evidence of her desperation. Along with Lady Booby, Didapper represents "much of the vice and artificiality Fielding [deplores]."[25] However, by himself Didapper typifies a special kind of upper-class fop, the "foolish beau."[26] In the Wilson segment of the novel, Fielding delineated the tragic consequences in the life of the "foolish beau"; in the character of Beau Didapper Fielding is carrying this portrayal to an absurd and satiric extreme. As with the characterization of Mrs. Slipslop, the pathetic physical features of the beau represent the corruption of his spirit. Both his mind and body are shriveled. The author describes him as "a young gentleman of about four foot five inches in height. He wore his own hair, though the scarcity of it might have given him sufficient excuse for a periwig. His face was thin and pale; the shape of his body and legs none of the best, for

he had very narrow shoulders and no calf; and his gait might more properly be called hopping than walking. The qualifications of his mind were well adapted to his person" (p. 269). Didapper is a ridiculous figure in every way, but being "entirely well satisfied with his own person and parts, so he was very apt to ridicule and laugh at any imperfection in another" (p. 269). Since he is heir to an "immense fortune" and depends on a "great man" who treats him "with the utmost disrespect" and gets from the Beau "plenary obedience to his commands" (p. 269), Didapper is able to live comfortably without greatly taxing his meagre mental resources. His vanity is so great that he believes he is the paragon of wit, style and passion; instead he is a model of ineffectuality, a being impossible to approach with any reaction other than laughter. His soft womanish body, his feeble attempt at manliness and his sexual impotence are treated comically by Fielding and represent the moral degeneration of the gentility. The scenes in which Didapper struggles vainly to kiss Fanny's breasts and wrestles the mannish Slipslop in bed are disgustingly hilarious and suggest his physical and spiritual sterility. Beau Didapper is a grotesque, a mass of wealth, vanity and nothing else crammed into a puny physique. With Slipslop, he is the most extreme Hogarthian caricature in the novel.

II

If Joseph, Fanny and Parson Adams can receive no humanity from those that they know, it is no wonder then that they are victimized by a series of strangers, and the affectations of strangers prove just as

harmful as the affectations of friends. For Joseph victimization is heaped upon victimization. After he is dismissed from Lady Booby's service and sent on his way, he is robbed and beaten on the road and left in a ditch, naked and injured. He is rescued, most reluctantly, by the occupants of a coach that happens to pass his way. Although the rescue probably saves his life, it is performed for the basest and most inhumane reasons. The rescuers fear responsibility if Joseph is left to die. But the coach occupants meet their match in selfishness in Mrs. Tow-wouse, wife of the proprietor of the inn where the injured Joseph is taken. A hysterical amalgam of bile and hypocrisy, Mrs. Tow-wouse refuses to give the little bit of aid that would alleviate the sufferings of a fellow human being. When finally she is forced to help, she does so grudgingly and gracelessly. When reminded by her husband of the importance of common charity, Mrs. Tow-wouse's response is characteristic of the perversion of Christian benevolence: "'Common charity a f--t! . . . . Common charity teaches us to provide for ourselves, and our families; and I and mine won't be ruined by your charity, I assure you" (p. 46). The common charity in question is a shirt and a few days' lodging; however, Mrs. Tow-wouse cannot even spare this. She reacts to the request for help as if she had been asked to clothe and lodge all of mankind. Mrs. Tow-wouse's familial concern quickly diminishes after Betty the servant-maid suggests that Joseph may be "a greater man than they took him for" (p. 54). Only then does Mrs. Tow-wouse "'pity the misfortunes of a [fellow] Christian'" (p. 54) and willingly give Joseph aid. Battestin sees in this behavior the "moral worthlessness of a merely politic philanthropy," because

Mrs. Tow-wouse is motivated by the hope that Joseph will reward her handsomely when he recovers.[27] In fact, this is not philanthropy but rather the self-interested maneuvering of a hypocrite. Mrs. Tow-wouse never comes face-to-face with her own moral culpability. In light of her culpability her reaction is especially ironic when she discovers Mr. Tow-wouse and Betty in bed together. Mrs. Tow-wouse stands as one morally wronged; she shrieks, "'This the reward of my virtue?'" (p. 68) Mrs. Tow-wouse cannot, of course, understand that the sexual fidelity of which she is so proud can in no way compensate for her grave deficiencies of charity and character.[28] And it is significant, as in the case of other affected characters, that her ill-formed bearing reflects her want of goodness with "admirable spirit and fidelity."[29] She has a face with a high forehead, a long nose which is "sharp and red," a pair of lips made up of "two bits of skin," a chin that is peaked, a set of high cheek bones that hide "a pair of small red eyes," and a voice that is "both loud and hoarse" (p. 51). The ugliness of Mrs. Tow-wouse is an outward manifestation of the "poverty of spirit" which deforms her character and afflicts everything with which she comes in contact.[30] The virulence of her affectation plagues all her relationships and her outlook on the world.

Blatant hypocrisy is to be found not only at the inns but also pervading society and corrupting many different types in society. One such type is the super patriot, that universal scourge who makes a public display of his nationalism, who is quick to spot treason in others and who fails when his own love of country is put to the test. Parson Adams meets one such gentleman on the road; he is a self-assured

and confident man. In the course of a wide ranging conversation, the gentleman explains to Adams his political ideas and his belief in patriotism, sacrifice and courage in the face of danger, and he laments the absence of these qualities in the nation. He insists: "'I would have all . . . [cowards] hanged, sir; I would have them hanged'" (p. 114). Adams talks of pitying the coward instead of condemning him and suggests that time and reason might make the coward brave. The gentleman is unmoved and responds with exhortations on courage and country. But as both men walk in the darkness, cries of terror ring out; Parson Adams rushes "'to the assistance of some poor creature whom some villains are murdering'" (p. 115); however, the swaggering patriot has suddenly been transformed into a trembling coward. He pleads with Adams: "'This is no business of ours; let us make as much haste as possible out of the way, or we may fall into their hands ourselves'" (p. 115). Adams makes no answer to the plea and heads in the direction of the outcry. His silence is a condemnation of both the patriot's rigid harshness and his outrageous hypocrisy. This hypocrisy hardly needs elucidation because it is so obvious; however, for Paulson it signifies Fielding's understanding of the difference between the apparent and the real in life and the inability of certain persons to recognize that at some point their words must cease and their actions begin.[31] This point never comes for the patriot. His affectation blocks any understanding he might have of his own deceptive nature. Fielding suggests that following the incident with Adams, "the man of courage" will run to his home "without once looking behind him: where we will leave him, to contemplate his own bravery, and to censure

the want of it in others . . . " (p. 115).

The patriot's affectation works itself out negatively; he runs away, but there are those whose affectations work themselves out positively. One such person is the fraudulent benefactor whom Adams, Joseph and Fanny meet at an inn. A man of great charm and perception, he realizes immediately that the three are in straitened circumstances, so he offers aid in the form of money, horses and even a position for the Parson. The next morning he "denies himself" to Adams, in effect, refusing to make good on his promises. Adams is shocked and disillusioned by this incident and decries the "wickedness . . . in the Christian world!" (p. 150) Joseph, however, had been suspicious from the beginning; he had learned from experience and his peers "'that those masters who promise the most perform the least'" (p. 150). Only the kindness of the inn's host enables the three to leave without paying their bill. The benefactor is much like Peter Pounce. Bloated vanity causes him to appear philanthropic and make promises he has no intention of keeping. But his deceptions go beyond the limit of mere pranks. The inn host explains that many of these practical jokes have led to ruined lives and even death. Fielding had stated in his preface that it may be said that contrary to his "own rules [he has] introduced vices . . . of a very black kind, into this work" (p. 12). The malignant streak of the benefactors goes far beyond affectation. It appears to be a manifestation of cruelty and evil, and its effect tends to overshadow the vicious acts perpetrated by other characters in the novel.

By baiting his intended victims with acts of kindness, the "roasting" squire traps the three travelers in much the same way as

they were trapped by the false benefactor. They are offered dinner at the squire's table only to be made objects of ridicule when they are there. The roasting is especially gross for the Parson who is mocked and taunted by the squire and his whole retinue of misfits. The squire is a moral monster whose infantile behavior and perverted vanity are tolerated only because of his wealth. He represents the self-indulgence of the idle rich carried to the extreme. Because of his self-centered nature he is capable of neither communication nor compassion. The squire's only concern is fulfilling his childish demands. The revolting creatures that surround the squire are the bizarre extensions of his own ego. This grotesque ego may have developed, Fielding suggests, as a result of "home tutelage and French foppery" and the fact that throughout his rearing the squire's every wish was indulged, preventing the development of discipline and character.[32] He respects no one. The important thing, for the squire, is the public humiliation of his victims -- a humiliation that is often accomplished with ingenuity. However, when he sees Fanny his lust is excited, and, in his attempt to abduct her, his usually mean nature becomes very ugly. Fortunately tragedy is averted when Fanny is saved by Peter Pounce, but except for thwarted lust and a near-fatal fever contracted after a dousing in water, the squire's life of cruel jokes is never really thwarted or avenged.

Paulson has interpreted the squire's actions as the result of a "momentary plunge into a kind of motiveless evil."[33] Such a theory suggests that he is suffering from temporary insanity, but everything about the squire's actions, particularly the way the pranks on Adams

are planned, suggests the opposite conclusion. It appears more likely that the "roasting" squire's monstrous self-deception has led to a condition in which he is the victim of the continuous war between his own passions.[34] Although wealth and power surround the squire, he is a base character because, as Hatfield defines it, "true gentility is shown to exist not in the external trappings of social station but in inner qualities of mind and spirit and in a generous willingness to translate these qualities into active principles of behavior."[35] Because of his position, the squire should set an example for others to follow; instead he has become a beast and a fool, the scornful by-product of affectation.

The characters discussed so far are valid representatives of the affected because vanity and hypocrisy poison their relationships with others. Allied with them is a specific group whose affectations not only violate common humanitarian impulses but professional oaths and responsibilities as well. For this group Fielding reserved special scorn.

III.

Fielding believed that man had a double obligation to his fellow man.[36] He should do no harm to an innocent neighbor and should help him if there is need. But in Fielding's society there was a particular group that voluntarily took on another obligation, an obligation promulgated publicly by virtue of the fact that taking it on gave its members certain special privileges and titles. This group constituted the professionals. In general they were pledged to aid in the betterment

of mankind. Specifically, if their calling was the ministry, they were to work for man's spiritual salvation, if the law, they were to see that justice prevailed, and if medicine, they were to seek to make man healthy and alleviate his pain. As a professional man himself, a lawyer, Fielding may have been particularly sympathetic to the problems and burdens of the professional man, but he could be bitterly critical when he felt that such men were shirking their obligations to society and using their privileges for selfish gain. Professionals, by the nature of their work, were supposed to discipline themselves, but they were, after all, human and subject to the same harmful effects of affectation as any other group in society. If the content of Joseph Andrews is any indication, Fielding believed that there were more malevolent professional men in society than benevolent ones. This was not only unfortunate for those who were ministered to, it was a disgrace and an indictment of the professions themselves.

Fielding saw affectation harming the professional man and his calling in several important ways. Although every professional man was not tarnished by affectation, it was affectation that plagued the professions in general. As Fielding delineates it, the most common and serious failing of professional men is their want of charity. So suffused with self-love are some men that they cannot even fabricate an air of sympathy and interest, although their work supposedly depends on it. Others manage to appear kind and solicitous toward their earnest supplicants, but the falseness of their feelings is often exposed in a very short time. The source of this lack of charity is a complete preoccupation with self on the part of the professional man. His

vanity prevents him from feeling for others, even those he is supposed to help. As a result his only concern is his own good and comfort, and in Fielding's society that meant greed, getting as much as one could for oneself no matter what the means or ethics involved. Quackery and fraud compound the indifference and selfishness of many professional men, so that the unsuspecting victim often suffers from the results of professional incompetence. In some cases incompetence comes as a by-product of indifference, in other cases as a by-product of stupidity, in all cases its results are destructive. In the novel, Fielding does delineate some affected professional men who are competent, but they often use their skills for dubious purposes.

Whether fools or not, most affected professionals manipulate the language to impress and confound the public. As a writer and as a professional man, Fielding was outraged by the way corrupt individuals used the language for their own gain by twisting the meanings of words and destroying truth.[37] Through this work the author accuses professionals of using jargon to mask ignorance and dissuade the inquisitive and not to communicate and elucidate the complex.

The clergy, as much as the other professions, receives Fielding's scorn and ridicule in the novel. It may be that he was especially outraged by their sanctimonious pretensions to moral purity and divine authority. In the novel there are many hypocrites, but none greater than those who wear the vestments of the church. Of the seven different clergymen delineated in the novel, only Abraham Adams is free of the taint of corruption.[38] The other six exemplify five different types of flaws: arrogance, ignorance, stubborn cruelty, boorishness and

greed.[39] These read like a catalog of "deadly sins", and in a sense they are because they deaden the heart to the spiritual and physical suffering of mankind.

Of the six corrupt clergymen in the novel, two are deserving of special consideration because they are particularly odious specimens and because Fielding created them with enough detail to demonstrate the extreme effects of affectation. Parsons Barnabus and Trulliber exemplify for Fielding the erroneous belief that salvation could be achieved by faith alone and not by charity, and their lives and actions, in negative ways, advance the latitudinarian belief in benevolence and good works as essential elements in the fulfillment of the Christian mission.[40] Barnabus, a kind of parson-in-residence at the Tow-wouse inn, is a confident combination of guile, gall and greed. Although not well versed in theology, Barnabus is skilled at making money by devious means, and he is in no way impeded by moral scruples in getting what he wants. He would sooner "'preach a funeral sermon for . . . a double price'" (p. 63) in praise of one of whom "'no man remembers anything good'" (p. 64), than preach free for an upright man. His mendacious talents overlap to other areas as well. Although he loves "sermons no better than a grocer [does] figs," Barnabus attempts to convince Abraham Adams that the sermons he is so desirous of publishing will have a better market if they are advertised as the work of "'a clergyman lately deceased, all warranted originals, and never printed.'" (p. 63). Barnabus cannot understand that Adams' motivation for publishing the sermons, aside from his intellectual vanity, is not the acquisition of wealth but the dissemination of wisdom. Barnabus is

also antagonistic to any doctrine that emphasizes benevolence and good deeds. Adams' beliefs are very much in concert with the ideas advanced by the clerical reformer Whitefield, the "'great . . . enemy to the luxury and splendor of the clergy'" (p. 67). Barnabus is outraged by those who would expect humbleness, contrition and humility from the clergy. He argues that Whitefield would reduce the clergy "'to the example of the primitive ages . . . and would insinuate to the people that a clergyman ought to be always preaching and praying'" (p. 67). Barnabus wants a large share of life's luxuries, and he refuses to accept appeals for humility from any man for any reason. But Adams' belief is not a negative concept of abnegation and asceticism; his is a positive Christian commitment to life with all the burdens and responsibilities such a commitment demands. For Barnabus, grace has become a convenient "substitute for Christian virtue in action."[41] For Adams, grace devoid of dedication and benevolence simply has no meaning.

Parson Trulliber more than matches Parson Barnabus in selfishness and indifference. Trulliber is outrageously vain and hypocritical, but by giving him a swinish nature, Fielding makes him a figure of comedy rather than a figure of evil. Adams goes to see Trulliber because he is in dire need and hopes that his fellow clergyman will grant him a small loan. Instead he is humiliated and refused. He meets Trulliber in the barnyard and is mistaken for a hog buyer. Trulliber tosses him into the sty so he can handle the hogs himself. Although the reader is inclined to be sympathetic to poor Adams floundering in the mud, he cannot help being amused by his predicament.

The fact that Trulliber has mistaken Adams for a fellow swineherd has nothing to do with Adams' demeanor or dress; it has to do with Trulliber's world view. Fielding makes Trulliber the spiritual brother of the hogs he tends. His appraisal and understanding of all that goes on about him comes from a swinish nature.[42]

In his relations with Adams, Trulliber degenerates from a man of bad judgment to an outright hypocrite. He is cordial to Adams when he believes there is potential profit at hand; he becomes coarse and uncharitable when he discovers that Adams has come to borrow money.[43] Adams innocently believes that Trulliber will help him as a fellow clergyman, but he soon learns that though Trulliber has "always that word [charity] in his mouth" (p. 143), he never gives a "farthing" to anyone in need. To Adams' modest request for aid, his brutal answer is "'I would have thee punished as a vagabond for thy impudence. Fourteen shillings indeed! I won't give thee a farthing'" (p. 141). When Adams attempts to remind him of his spiritual obligations to charity, Trulliber justifies his baseness by accusing Adams of being a clerical fraud: ["'I know what charity is, better than to give to vagabonds'" (p. 141). But Adams knows that his position and title are irrelevant; he is a man in need: "'Suppose I am not a clergyman, I am nevertheless thy brother; and thou, as a Christian, much more as a clergyman, art obliged to relieve my distress'" (p. 141). Trulliber, however, functions on a different standard of morality very similar to that of the pigs he tends. In fact, Reid believes that Trulliber is spiritually and physically swinish with his great belly symbolizing his "grasping ingestiveness."[44] As to this critic's notion that Trulliber is "one

of the most . . . brutal exemplars" of hypocrisy in the novel, it all depends on whether that which is brutal can also be funny.[45] Although Trulliber is devoid of compassion and cruel to his fellow clergyman, he is a figure of comedy. Philip Stevick believes that Trulliber is purposefully comic because Fielding wanted him to exemplify vanity and hypocrisy and not arouse "fear, anger, or moral indignation," that might lead readers to "hate [him] out of existence."[46] In this instance, Stevick's understanding of Fielding's motive in creating this character is open to considerable question. There are other characters in the novel as vicious as Trulliber (the patriot, the false benefactor, the "roasting" squire) who stand as models of affectation and whom we do not "hate out of existence." Trulliber is a character who engenders both revulsion and comedy because the base things that he does are often done in amusing ways and do not destroy but only inconvenience the innocent. Adams' experience with Trulliber does not erode his faith in the goodness of humanity, but it does teach him that within his own "sacred order" there are "worse knaves than any depicted in ancient literature."[47]

Knaves, however, are hardly limited to membership in the clergy. In Fielding's own profession, the law, are to be found examples of "irregular practitioners or 'pettifoggers'" who for suitable recompense were "prepared to undertake all kinds of shady legal business."[48] Fielding heaps special scorn on the corrupt members of his own profession; he is particularly sensitive to the manner in which the law could be deformed for the profit of few to the detriment of many. Lawyer Scout, whom Fielding depicted "with real bitterness," is hard

to surpass in deceit and corruption.[49] Scout is engaged by Lady Booby to prevent the marriage of Joseph and Fanny. Lady Booby's purpose is to prevent the marriage by somehow changing the law, but Scout, in an obsequious manner, asserts that of "'a hundred lawyers, not one or all of them could alter the law,'" but he hastens to assure her "that /it is/ in the power of a lawyer . . . to prevent the law's taking effect.'" (p. 242). The result of Scout's cunning is a conviction for larceny (for cutting a hassel-twig worth three half pence) and a month's confinement in Bridewell prison, which, fortunately for the young lovers, is never carried out. The legal deposition charging Joseph and Fanny with the crime, which Scout writes himself, shows him to be an ignoble union of guile and ignorance whose main concern is not justice but rather keeping the letter of the law intact at the expense of its spirit through the use of trickery and lies. Lawyer Scout does not bear complete responsibility for what he tries to do with the law; he is, after all, manipulated by Lady Booby, but he would not have played the role of "pettifogger" in this case if it were not for his great proclivity for corruption. In a similar situation Parson Adams is also tempted by Lady Booby, but he resists her demands even under threats; Lawyer Scout has no such moral backbone. If justice manages to survive, it is in spite of and not because of his efforts.

In the same way that justice triumphs at the end of Joseph Andrews, victimized but preserved, so Joseph manages to survive his wounds in spite of his physician. Following a severe beating by highwaymen, the injured young man is taken to the Tow-wouse inn where he is ministered to by a surgeon who is both greedy and incompetent. His sympathetic

understanding is in direct proportion to the size of his patient's purse, and his interest in his patient wanes rapidly when he discovers that Joseph is penniless. Parson Adams' arrival on the scene, and his injunction to the surgeon that it is the "'duty of men of all professions to apply their skill gratis for the relief of the poor and necessitous'" (p. 51) cannot move this practitioner to any real understanding or compassion. His reply to Adams that "'all the surgeons in London'" (p. 51) could not help this case, neatly sidesteps the question of his own responsibility to the needy, and stamps him as a vain and fatuous practitioner who buries his many failures with an indifferent and well practiced professional shrug. Hatfield sees the surgeon not as a wise and experienced healer with pride in his work but as a skilled tradesman paid for profit, and one who is not learned in a general sense but a skilled technician of limited wisdom.[50] This is true in the sense that Hatfield defines professional wisdom; in another sense, however, Fielding is not really concerned with professional skill. Sagacity, age and achievement are not the central ingredients of benevolence. The charitable person has deep feelings of compassion for his fellowmen. These feelings develop spontaneously. Fielding created many characters in the novel who are simple and uneducated but who make sacrifices for those in need. The problem of the surgeon is not his limited wisdom but the vanity and hypocrisy which have blocked his charitable impulses.

Unfortunately for Joseph and the surgeon's other patients, his limitations extend to his professional abilities. When questioned about Joseph's condition, shortly after the beating, the surgeon spins out a complicated, meaningless and ultimately erroneous diagnosis which

has in it such savory words as "occiput," "divellicated," "pericranium," "pneumatic" and "deliruus." As for the prognosis, the surgeon pronounces solemnly: "His case is that of a dead man" (p. 52). It is clear from Fielding's portrayal that the surgeon is sidestepping responsibility and attempting to disprove his incompetence by "dressing out ignorance in language."[51] The surgeon, however, is a victim of his own quackery along with his suffering patients. He fools himself and is, therefore, unable to achieve his full development as a human being. Adams, of course, is not deceived; he recognizes that Joseph will survive with humane care because of his youthful strength and in spite of the ministrations of a fool who has pledged his aid to others but cares only for himself.

In Joseph Andrews, affectation is the chief source of harm in society. By demonstrating how affectation is manifested in a great variety of individuals, Fielding also shows its deleterious effect on society, the wrongs inflicted on the innocent, the corruption engendered in worthwhile institutions. That there are those who could be victimized by the affected and still retain their purity of heart and their faith in their fellow men is evidence of Fielding's belief in the ultimate triumph of goodness.

CHAPTER IV EXEMPLARS OF BENEVOLENCE

Against the affected and their venomous acts stand Abraham Adams, Joseph Andrews, Fanny Goodwill and a small group of minor characters who represent benevolence and charity in the novel. To be sure, this group is dwarfed by the vain and hypocritical who populate the pages of Joseph Andrews, but through the example of the lives of the virtuous, Fielding demonstrates his belief that benevolence most often springs spontaneously in the simple and pure of heart and that benevolence will win an ultimate moral victory over cynicism and viciousness. With so clear a dichotomy between virtue and vice, Joseph Andrews could easily have become an essay on moral rectitude with each character an emblem for this merit or that failing; it is a tribute to Fielding's creativity that most of the main characters are imbued with enough humanity to make them believable and real. The flaws that Fielding developed in each of his virtuous characters are important because they accentuate the good qualities by contrast. These flaws are most often the object of gentle laughter rather than ridicule because they give evidence of warm hearts and common humanity. Miss Jenkins has identified in Fielding a strong sense of moral beauty which has resulted in the creation of personal beauty for many of those in the novel.[1] Indeed, just as ugliness becomes synonymous with affectation in Joseph Andrews, beauty becomes synonymous with benevolence. This is not merely physical beauty; it is a beauty that shines out from the soul.

The one quality that distinguishes all of the virtuous characters, major and minor, in the novel is compassion, their ability to feel for

the sufferings of their fellow men. In some cases their compassion is a by-product of suffering; in other cases it grows out of a Christian obligation to humanity; in all cases it emerges from a personality that is open, warm and unselfish. If compassion had not been in short supply in eighteenth century England, perhaps Fielding would not have made such a point of celebrating it through the lives of his benevolent characters, but men being what they are, realistic examples of goodness and goodness itself were in dire need in society as they always seem to be. Benevolent words echoed through this society, yet little was done for those in need. Compassionate figures in the novel are those that feel for their fellow man and also act in his behalf, often at considerable risk to themselves. It is charitable action that often causes the virtuous to become "the victims and butts of this world, [but in the end] they triumphantly put it to shame."[2] Well Fielding knew that those who should have been most ashamed were often the ones most arrogant and self-righteous about their own virtues. Also, the triumph of the compassionate was often no more than a moral triumph, yet Fielding believed that such a victory was far better than one devoid of morality and honor.

I

The chief exemplars of benevolence and the protagonists of the novel are Abraham Adams, Joseph Andrews and Fanny Goodwill. It is they, their journey, their tribulations and their ultimate victory that the reader follows through the novel. If there is one character of these three that gives the novel a central focus, engages in the

most action, dominates events and best reflects Fielding's philosophy, it is Abraham Adams; he is at the very center of this novel. Without his overbearing and energetic personality, this novel would lack substance. There is almost unanimous critical agreement identifying Adams as the chief protagonist, central figure, standard bearer, primary interest or simply "hero" of Joseph Andrews. But it is more than mere domination of events that makes him the hub of the work; it is his personality that attracts such close interest. Adams is a man comprising "the oddest contradictions, the most diverting eccentricities, . . . always the same delightful mixture of benevolence and simplicity, of pedantry and credulity and ignorance of this world."[3] Many critics have attempted to define the contradictory qualities in Adams' nature. Godden comes close when he describes Adams as a combination of "primitive goodness and practical Christianity."[4] Maynard Mack may even be closer when he characterizes Adams as the "'vir bonus' or moral man . . . simple and unsophisticated . . . indignant and courageous, defending virtue and the public good."[5] To attempt a definition, however, is to shrink Adams' great spirit into an explanation that can, at best, only tell a part of the story. Although he is a poor man with a wife and six children, he is willing to risk everything he has in defense of the righteous and the good. Adams struggles, most often successfully, in a series of unique and difficult situations which illuminate the exemplary qualities of his character. On his long journey, he fights with two separate groups of evil doers, nurses Joseph back to health, saves Fanny from rape, stands up to the threats of Lady Booby and engages in a succession of moral disputes with people in different

professions and walks of life, attempting to instruct them in their obligations to God and their fellow man. The Christian belief that Parson Adams represents is broad enough to admit to the salvation of a Turk if he were a good man and performed righteous acts. Unfortunately, most of the affected Adams meets on his journey cannot accept his vigorous Christianity with its emphasis on helping the "weak and disinherited of this world."[6] Although he is baited and spurned by many of whom he has asked charity and righteousness, he never seems to grow weary of his burdens. Although his clothes are threadbare, it is strength of character that makes his manhood not foppish dress. Although he is at times ridiculous, he brings dignity to his calling. Godden's description of the Parson and his life is apt: "His ill clad and uncouth figure moves among the vicious and prosperous, and we perceive the uglyness of vice and the poverty of wealth."[7]

Such goodness would be insufferable and unbelievable if devoid of all frailties, but, true to the honesty of Fielding's work, Adams is a creation who can be accepted as well for his flaws as his perfections. Spilka's contention that the character was created in order to expose virtue and affectation in the same person overstates the case.[8] More than likely, the author was attempting to show that his character was above all a human being. Adams' faults are not hateful but exasperating; they are a source for humor and intensify his virtues. Copious examples point this up. After the protagonists have been tricked by the false benefactor, the generous innkeeper allows them to leave without paying their bill. But before they depart, Adams gets into a heated dispute with his host concerning the superiority of books over experience as

"'the only . . . by which any knowledge is to be acquired'" (p. 155). Fortunately, the timely entrance of Joseph saves Adams from incurring the innkeeper's enmity.[9] The Parson has not the slightest inkling of the fatuousness of his intellectual vanity. Particularly in light of his recent victimization, this incident is funny and has led Cross to identify vanity as the "supreme touch" in the humorous creation of the Parson.[10] At times the advice Adams gives out, most often unsolicited, can be glaringly inappropriate and even inconsistent with what he himself practices. For instance, after Joseph and Adams have been bound by the "roasting" squire's men, Joseph agonizes over Fanny's fate, and in a long rambling response the Parson exclaims: "You have not only lost her, but have reason to fear the utmost violence which lust and power can inflict upon her" (p. 224). These words intended to comfort, accentuate Joseph's rage, agony and helplessness and have the reverse effect.[11] Toward the end of the novel, Fanny and Joseph are given a sermon on moderation in love and submission to the will of Divine Providence. In the midst of this, word arrives that Adams' youngest son has drowned. Far from submitting to the will of Providence, the bereaved father begins "to stamp about the room and deplore his loss with the bitterest agony" (p. 265). Attempting comfort, Joseph uses the Parson's own words, only to be rebuffed. When, a short time later, the report turns out to be false, Adams' reaction is similarly intemperate. Later on in the scene, when he once again counsels love with "'moderation and discretion'" Mrs. Adams reminds him that his words are foolish because he has been a "'loving and cherishing husband'" (p. 267) to her quite unhampered by moderation. Despite his foolishness, petty vanities and inconsistencies, it is not the flaws that are

memorable in the Parson.

Abraham Adams is a sympathetic human being. His mistakes, more often than not, are made innocently and are the product of a man for whom the "devious ways of mankind" are beyond comprehension.[12] And even his wearying habit of advice-giving stems from a strong desire to aid those in need. With his counsel comes the full weight of his commitment. He continually rushes into danger without any hope of selfish reward. His usual recompense is the sure knowledge that he has fulfilled his spiritual obligation as a true Christian. The improvement in Adams' circumstances, that comes to him at the end of the novel, is not a direct reward for any act of benevolence he has performed but a symbol of the author's belief in a just universe. There is nothing within the novel to lead the reader to believe that an actual Abraham Adams living in the eighteenth century would have been so rewarded for his good deeds. Fielding clearly felt that more of such men, "perennially innocent," were needed in his society.[13] He also realized that a true commitment to man had to generate in the spirit and could not come from the proffering of material rewards. With all his flaws Abraham Adams is a very special man, the genuine "conscience" of eighteenth century English society.[14] The good Parson will be continually involved in the affairs of man, perpetually risking his fortunes and himself, because he is "one of the heroic, sainted children of this world, whose love, spontaneous and inexhaustible, conquers all."[15]

Because of his selflessness, maturity, vitality and role in the novel, Parson Adams attracts most of the interest, yet this does not

make Joseph Andrews a minor character. He appears so very different because his journey is so very different; his chief preoccupation is to find Fanny and marry her. Also, Joseph is still maturing philosophically. He is not yet at Adams' stage of development. In every sense of the word he is a seeker, and at the end of the journey, after having confronted temptation and adversity, he appears to have found what he is seeking. Although a rather labored case has been made for Joseph as the chief protagonist of the novel, this question is much less important than understanding the development of his character. In the earlier sections of the novel Joseph is obviously directed by the Parson, but as time and events pass by, Joseph becomes more perspicacious and confident, he grows somewhat weary of Adams' continuous sermonizing and he grows anxious to marry Fanny without delay. Despite the powerful inner forces that are driving him, the actions he displays along the journey make him an appropriate vehicle for Fielding's ideas on charity and chastity.[16] The quality of chastity appears somewhat ludicrous within the character, especially since he is given to boasting about it, but as Battestin has observed, "it functions nonetheless as a wholesome antithesis to the fashionable lusts and intrigues of high society."[17] It becomes clear, somewhat later, that Joseph's well protected virtue is not the righteous inclination of a prig but the genuine fidelity of a lover. This is not to suggest that he is entirely immune to Lady Booby's enticements. In his second letter to his sister Pamela, Joseph makes it clear that his virtue is under siege and that he hopes it can be maintained "against all temptations" (p. 38).[18] Beyond the fact that Joseph is saving himself for Fanny, his refusal to

submit to Lady Booby is an assertion of his own human dignity. Golden has accurately recognized that beneath the surface comedy of Joseph's self-righteous chasteness is the philosophical implication of his having forced Lady Booby to regard him as a human being and not a sexual object for her amusement.[19] Even though he is dismissed because of his refusal, he has defied a member of the upper class who considers him, above all, an object of manipulation. Joseph may be a sexual innocent throughout the novel, but he comes to represent the struggle for understanding and goodness that has often been a part of man's most virtuous desires.

Because of the struggle and the development of his character to strength and perception, Joseph presents a good contrast to the naivete and downright foolishness sometimes expressed by Adams.[20] Joseph occasionally grows short with Adams' constant sermonizing, especially when Adams insists on the validity of nonsensical ideas.[21] This is particularly true in their argument over the merits of a public versus a private education. Adams asserts that he prefers a "'private school, where boys may be kept in innocence and ignorance" of worldly vice, but Joseph knows "'if a boy be of a mischievous, wicked inclination, no school, though ever so private, will ever make him good, on the contrary, if he be of a righteous temper, you may trust him to London, or wherever you please -- he will be in no danger of being corrupted'" (p. 195). Although Joseph is young he uses his experiences in the world of men as his guide; Adams' experiences in the world of books sometimes lead him in the wrong directions. Joseph's experiences provide valuable instruction to him, although they cannot prevent his

suffering when he chooses to make a stand against the will of his superiors. Joseph suffers considerably in the novel, and because he is an appealing character, the reader is inclined to condemn his persecutors.[22] Joseph stands in sharp contrast to the affected, the vicious and the false in the novel. His minor flaws of character are the product of youth and the willful exuberance of a man in love. And though he is presented with many opportunities to display avarice, his real desires are simple and homely. He has no wish to rise on the social scale but, with the least delay, hopes to marry and support Fanny "in that station to which she is born and with which she is content."[23] In Joseph Andrews, Fielding engendered the best of the English countryside, a robust physique in which virtue and manliness are united.[24]

Another charming personification of "rustic beauty and innocence" is Fanny Goodwill.[25] She is as pure in heart as Adams and Joseph but where they actually become the force and the instrument of goodness in action, she stands as a symbol of goodness. Fanny has no strong fist or crabstick with which to fight and only a virtuous heart for protection; she cannot go off in search of the dragons of wickedness; in fact, no matter where she is, cruelty and lust seem to seek her out for victimization. There is a two-fold reason for this: her fresh buxom beauty is a natural attraction, especially for the lecherous, and her obvious innocence is a temptation for corruption to the villainous. Spilka sees her as a touchstone or exemplar who, in the pages of the novel, is thrust through every level of soceity, exposing either the vanity or hypocrisy or the kindness and charity in whomever she meets.[26]

Her relationship with Joseph is sincere, uncomplicated and loving, quite different from the selfishness and lust present in other relationships in the work. Characteristically, the two lovers have a total interest in each other's welfare; they have forsaken romantic interest in any others; they fight attempts of social betters to destroy their love, but they are able, at the same time, to subordinate strong desires for sexual fulfillment to the rules of their church.[27] The love between Joseph and Fanny is as pure and simple as they are, and their lives are "bound by Christian prudence and decorum" and preserved and blessed by honest virtue.[28] Their marriage, at the novel's end, is the reward for their tenderness, patience and perseverance, and it is evidence of the presence in this world of good and its occasional triumph.

II

Fielding also created a host of minor characters who are natural and convincing because they are endowed with unique qualities.[29] Among these four individuals are the postilion, Betty the maid-servant, the pedlar and Mr. Wilson. These four characters are also exemplars of benevolence because they selflessly hold out a hand of help to perfect strangers. Without a lecture on Christian obligation, a request for human sympathy or an appeal to self-interest, these altruists help Abraham Adams, Joseph Andrews and Fanny Goodwill on their journey and enable the protagonists to complete their quests. The benevolent perform good deeds spontaneously and without hope of recognition or reward.

After Joseph is robbed, beaten and left to die in a ditch, he is rescued and brought by coach to the Tow-wouse inn. The passengers in

the coach represent the classes and types most commonly delineated in the novel. Of the seven persons on the coach, only the lowly postilion has charity for the sufferings of his fellow man. The others are ready and willing to turn their backs on one in need, and they present "an elaborate little commentary on charity and hypocrisy."[30] It is the postilion who "hearing a man's groans, stopt his horses, and told the coachman" (p. 42). When he discovers who it is, the wit, the old gentleman, the prudish lady, her footman and the coachman refuse aid and wish to leave. A young lawyer, traveling with them, compels them to save Joseph but for the basest and most self-interested reasons. He fears that if Joseph is left to die they "might be called to some account for his murder" (p. 43). The passengers grudgingly acquiesce but refuse to provide covering for the cold, naked man although there are "several greatcoats about the coach" (p. 43). It is the poor postilion who gives his own greatcoat to Joseph and swears "a great oath (for which he was rebuked by the passengers), 'that he would rather ride in his shirt all his life than suffer a fellow creature to lie in so miserable a condition'" (p. 44). It is significant that such generosity comes from one in the postilion's station because it represents an "upwelling of charity from the poor and pure."[31] Even though he will later be transported for the minor crime of robbing a hen-roost, the postilion has shown himself to be the moral superior of all the coach passengers. He is the victim of the harsh justice of a society that brutally punishes petty crime but seems to encourage corruption on a grand scale. His goodness is entirely spontaneous, freely given without hope or thought of reward. He stands in bitter contrast to the coach occupants and their "common attitudes of meanness, . . .

hypocrisy [and] self-interested Hobbesian philanthropy" that Fielding so greatly detested.[32]

When the injured Joseph is taken to the Tow-wouse inn, he is ministered to by Betty the maid-servant, a warm-hearted young woman filled with much the same selflessness and philanthropy as the postilion. For Betty the sight of a "'poor naked man, who hath been robbed and murdered'" (p. 46) is enough to send her scurrying into action. Although she is blocked at every turn by Mrs. Tow-wouse, Betty does manage to find clothes and lodging for Joseph and to assuage his wounds. Unfortunately for the maid-servant, her "warm animal spirits" get the best of her senses and she embraces Joseph "with great eagerness" (p. 71) only to be locked out of the room by him.[33] Her sexual agitation leads her to her master's bedroom, discovery by his wife and then immediate and violent dismissal. Betty's fate is ironic and hapless; despite her lapse of chastity she is far more virtuous than many of the characters in the novel, especially her mistress Mrs. Tow-wouse.[34] For Fielding, the human frailties of the benevolent are measured on a very different scale from the inhuman flaws of the cold-hearted. For the author, perfection was far less important than a charitable soul. Betty the maid-servant rises above the smug and self-righteous in love, compassion and common humanity.

The pedlar is another representative of the lower classes who does not have to be begged to perform good deeds; benevolence comes from him spontaneously. Although he is a poor fellow, this former "drummer in an Irish regiment" now must "travel the country as a pedlar" (p. 144), yet he is ready to give all that he has away and even

risks his life for strangers because they need his help. Following Adams' failure to borrow money to pay for inn charges, the inn hostess threatens him with a warrant unless the bill is settled immediately. On hearing of Adams' plight, the pedlar offers "'with all his heart'" all that he has in his pocket, "'six shillings and sixpence'" (p. 144). The irony is: "These poor people, who could not engage the compassion of riches and piety, were at length delivered out of their distress by the charity of a poor pedlar" (p. 144). But this is not the pedlar's only opportunity for service to the Parson. Near the conclusion of the novel, Adams' youngest son Jacky falls into a river; a bystander "a little too eager . . . to relate ill news" runs directly to the Parson to acquaint him "of a fate which he concluded to be inevitable," but in the meantime the pedlar saves the boy's life and brings him back "in a wet condition . . . but alive and running" (p. 266) to his parents. The pedlar's kind acts are performed with whole heart and without hope of reward. At the conclusion of the novel, the pedlar plays an important role in unravelling the mystery of Fanny's parentage. For his services to all and for his obvious honesty, the pedlar is given "handsome presents both from Mr. Wilson and Mr. Booby" and is appointed the latter's excise-man," a trust which he discharges with such justice, that he is greatly beloved in his neighborhood" (p. 298). This reward for the pedlar, like the good fortune of Abraham Adams, seems coincidental rather than inevitable. Much as the postilion and Betty the maid-servant act selflessly, so does the pedlar, but just as chance subverts their fortunes it elevates his.

One dark evening, toward the end of their journey, Adams, Joseph and Fanny, weary from their adventuring, come to the house of Mr. Wilson on foot and ask for aid. He immediately brings them in and gives them the comfort and hospitality of his home. The three spend the night there, and in the course of the stay Mr. Wilson tells his life story to the Parson and Joseph. His life has also been a journey, from meanness and self-indulgence to penitence, reform and intellectual honesty. In these circumstances Wilson's story is especially meaningful. At one time he cared only for himself; now he cares enough so that total strangers share the comfort of his home and learn the bitter experiences of his life. Wilson's life story is an allegory of much of what the author is trying to communicate in his novel.

The Wilson digression, as it is sometimes called, is similar in content to a series of pictures named "The Rake's Progress" portrayed in oil by Fielding's friend William Hogarth. It is an eighteenth-century morality tale in which a weak and innocent young man of some means comes to the city and, lacking mature guidance, is introduced, in succession, to foppery, alcohol, gambling, seduction, adultery and outright debauchery and suffers their attendant evils, drunkenness, disease and destitution. It is foppery that helped him gain entrance into smart society and later is partially responsible for his downfall. From the dizzying heights of the London social whirl he is cast into debtor's prison, significantly as a result of the suit brought by his tailor, where he finds himself friendless and in despair.[35] Although an acquaintance had described Wilson as "'one whom Fortune could not save if she would'" (p. 185), it is fortune that gives him one last chance to reform, coming in the person of his beautiful relative

Harriet Hardy and a winning lottery ticket worth £ 3,000. Jumping at an unbelievable opportunity for redemption, Wilson embraces Harriet and the money, both of which are freely given with love.[36] He then forsakes his dishonorable ways and leaves the "corrupting pressures of the city to find peace in the country in the arms of a chaste and loving wife."[37] Here in the country he raises a fine family and lives a pleasant life, and although his existence is not idyllic, it is graced with an inner contentment he never could have achieved in the city.

For Adams and Joseph, this tale, sordid and harrowing as it is, reinforces what they have come to believe about the deceptive temptations of the city. For the reader, Wilson's story is structurally and thematically at the very core of the novel because it reiterates the most important themes: vice versus virtue, city versus country, selfishness versus benevolence, vanity and hypocrisy versus truth, and chance and acquiescence versus providence and forthright personal action.[38] Wilson's journey from the city into the country parallels the journey of Adams, Joseph and Fanny. In both cases there is a "moral pilgrimage from the variety and corruption of the Great City to the naturalness and simplicity of the country."[39] After the follies he has committed, Wilson's exit from the city is a happy one; he leaves with no regrets, no bitterness, no misanthropy. The fact that he treats the three strangers with generosity and is eager to impart his hard-earned wisdom to them emphasizes the positive feelings he has toward his fellow man and reflects a character whose weaknesses nearly brought it to ruin but whose strengths gave it the power to reform.

Fielding makes it quite clear that Wilson's life in the country is not perfect. The senseless killing of the daughter's dog is symbolic of the fact that it is impossible to hide from cruelty and injustice, yet one has a better chance close to nature, away from the temptations of the city.[40] This, of course, is the choice that Joseph and Fanny make. They will spend their lives together in the beauty and peace of the countryside. Wilson's journey from innocence to corruption to tranquility and wisdom, represents, for Fielding, the path that the lost and foolish should follow.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

Fielding's stated purpose in Joseph Andrews is to expose vanity and hypocrisy as an admonishment to the foolish and a warning to the innocent who might, under certain circumstances, fall into error. In his novel he does unmask the Ridiculous, but at the same time he carefully delineates examples of the benevolent and charitable as if to demonstrate the positive alternatives open to the individual seeking goodness and justice. Fielding also makes it clear that men need not be wealthy or powerful to initiate good deeds. A poor man like the pedlar achieves true Christian nobility, yet he does not reach this same position in the material world nor is there any indication Fielding would want him to. There is no egalitarian tendency in Fielding. He has no wish to overturn the social structure and equalize the positions in society. He does, however, want all those in society to be secure in their positions and treat their fellow men with honesty and justice. Whether Fielding entertained any real hope that such an ideal world could ever come about is questionable. Some critics see Fielding's real appraisal of humanity reflected in his affected characters. Wright, for instance, believes that a study of the author's work clearly indicates that he had a distaste for much of humanity.[1] Wright theorizes that Fielding's view was a dark one in which "the most that could be hoped for was 'to make good men wise'. This is a bleak and fatalistic view of human nature, far removed from the cheerful optimism sometimes imputed to Fielding, . . . and the measure of his pessimism is perhaps his willingness to work with expedients, a willingness based upon his

recognition of the fact, as he saw it, that man is incorrigible."[2] This view of Fielding's philosophy could only be adopted from a selective reading of Joseph Andrews. It rather neatly overlooks the positive benevolence of Abraham Adams and Joseph Andrews and ignores as well affectation turned to generosity, as exemplified by Mr. Wilson.

Johnson, Battestin, Hatfield and others take a more traditional view of Fielding's philosophy. The chief stumbling block to the acceptance of the author as pessimist is his use of humor. Fielding's humor is so broad, warm-hearted and wholesome that it is difficult to see him a brooding and bitter misanthrope. There is certainly realistic understanding of society in Joseph Andrews and righteous indignation of human beings and human frailty and the creation of characters that personify the best in mankind. Perhaps Johnson pinpoints Fielding's philosophical view when he asserts that the author has a "humorous, good-natured, commonsense approach to life [which portrays] the best aim of man" and uses laughter as an instrument of truth to "rout out excess, which is Ridiculous."[3]

To interpret the novel as purely optimistic is to distort the book's denouement and Fielding's outlook on his society and the world. Although the lovers are justly united in church and Parson Adams and others are rewarded for their diligence, Fielding gives us no indication that everyone will live happily ever after. Fools, hypocrites and scoundrels of every variety will continue in heavy supply, despite the efforts of Fielding to drive them out with wit much as Abraham Adams attempted to drive them out with his crabstick. It may be for this reason that Hatfield notes an ironic twist in the movement toward

happiness at the novel's end because "not only is Joseph not rewarded for the same kind of virtue which made Pamela's fortune: he positively suffers as a result of it; and the pointed artificiality of the novel's happy ending, far from being a flaw, drives home the moral that there is no necessary cause-and-effect connection between virtue and worldly happiness and prosperity."[4] The wedding of Joseph and Fanny may be a triumph over the forces of degradation, but it is, at best, a coincidental triumph. Nowhere in Joseph Andrews does its author offer a guarantee of temporal happiness as a reward for good deeds done in this world. Good deeds are the obligation of the Christian; earthly rewards may follow or they may not.

Fielding offers no guarantees, but he does present a pertinent and sagacious notion of man. As Battestin has suggested, Fielding sees man as a battlefield in which "reason and a mutinous army of passions" fight for dominance.[5] The outcome of this struggle is never certain but, all too often unfortunately, it can be accurately predicted. In Joseph Andrews, through the characters and their crises, the author is able to portray how such battles might have occurred, and in what way they might have been won or lost. If man is ever to improve, he has to understand how this struggle takes place, and to accomplish this end Fielding "ruthlessly exposes the secret egoism which lies behind our apparently most disinterested actions, and which prompts us to choose one side rather than another."[6] Within the novel Fielding elucidated this struggle by personifying the various warring passions as a host of arresting characters, some of whom are more believable and human than others, but all of whom, whether they exemplify vice or

virtue, are vivid enough to make the author's purpose understandable. The entire thrust of Fielding's energies is employed to convince man that a life of reason is preferable to one dominated by this "mutinous army of passions," and he believes that through a life of wholesome work in the country and through honest love brought to a good marriage the better nature of man might dominate.

All the characters that appear in the pages of Joseph Andrews represent symbolic truth -- truth that asks the reader to think carefully and then face himself honestly. In their diversity, these characters represent paths of life that men actually follow and other paths that the author hopes men might follow. While laughing at vice, Fielding wants the reader to embrace virtue. While recognizing the Ridiculous about himself, Fielding hopes man can perceive the benevolence within himself. Only by turning outward can men ennoble their souls. This may seem too much of a request for frail mankind, but for Henry Fielding, soulmate of Abraham Adams, the rewards of benevolence were worth any effort.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

[1] Martin C. Battestin, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews (Middletown, 1959), p. 152.

[2] Elizabeth Jenkins, Henry Fielding (Denver, 1948), pp. 40-41.

[3] Battestin, Moral Basis, pp. 14-20.

[4] Henry Fielding, Joseph Andrews and Shamela, ed. Martin C. Battestin (Boston, 1961), p. 46.

[5] Battestin, Moral Basis, pp. 14-20.

[6] Ibid., p. 70.

Chapter II

[1] F. Homes Dudden, Henry Fielding: His Life, Works, and Times, Volume I (Oxford, 1952), p. 334.

[2] G. M. Godden, Henry Fielding: A Memoir (London, 1910), p. 128.

[3] B. L. Reid, "Utmost Merriment, Strictest Decency: Joseph Andrews," The Swanee Review, LXXV (Winter, 1967), 575.

[4] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 52.

[5] Morris Golden, Fielding's Moral Psychology (Amhurst, 1966), p. 25.

[6] Ibid., p. 42.

[7] Glen W. Hatfield, Henry Fielding and the Language of Irony (Chicago, 1968), p. 179.

[8] Aurelien Digeon, The Novels of Fielding (New York, 1962), p. 85.

[9] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 105.

[10] Ibid., p. 26.

[11] Battestin, "Introduction," p. xxxvi.

Chapter III

[1] Maurice Johnson, Fielding's Art of Fiction, (Philadelphia, 1961), p. 60.

[2] F. O. Bissell, "Fielding's Theory of the Novel," Cornell Studies in English, XXII (1933), 37.

Chapter III
(Continued)

[3] Dudden, p. 383.

[4] Hiiam K. Banerjii, Henry Fielding (Bombay, 1962), p. 126.

[5] Godden, p. 126.

[6] Banerjii, p. 112.

[7] Wilbur L. Cross, The History of Henry Fielding, Volume I (New Haven, 1918), p. 336.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., p. 339.

[10] Golden, p. 22.

[11] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[12] Dudden, p. 366.

[13] Banerjii, p. 123.

[14] Dudden, p. 365.

[15] Michael Irwin, Henry Fielding: The Tentative Realist (Oxford, 1957), p. 127.

[16] Mark Spilka, "Comic Resolution in Fielding's Joseph Andrews," College English, XV (October, 1953), 16.

[17] Dudden, p. 36.

[18] Hatfield, Language of Irony, p. 177.

[19] Cross, p. 338.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Bissell, p. 73.

[22] Andrew Wright, Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast (London, 1965), p. 18.

[23] Ronald Paulson, Satire and the Novel in the Eighteenth-Century (New Haven, 1967), p. 115.

[24] Douglas Brooks, "Pamela and Fielding's Joseph Andrews," Essays in Criticism, XVII (April, 1952), 148.

Chapter III
(Continued)

[25] Spilka, p. 16.

[26] Irwin, p. 71.

[27] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 98.

[28] Ibid., p. 111.

[29] Austin Dobson, Henry Fielding: Memoir (New York, 1900), p. 108.

[30] Golden, p. 79.

[31] Paulson, p. 143.

[32] Reid, p. 578.

[33] Paulson, p. 160.

[34] Golden, p. 97.

[35] Hatfield, Language of Irony, pp. 119-120.

[36] Irwin, p. 75.

[37] Hatfield, Language of Irony, p. 154.

[38] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 143.

[39] Dudden, p. 363.

[40] Hatfield, Language of Irony, pp. 128-131.

[41] Golden, p. 43.

[42] Bissell, p. 72.

[43] Reid, p. 572.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Philip Stevick, "Fielding and the Meaning of History," P.M.L.A., LXXIX (December, 1964), 561-568.

[47] Cross, p. 329.

[48] Dudden, p. 379.

Chapter III
(Continued)

[49] Ibid.

[50] Glenn W. Hatfield, "Quacks, Pettifoggers, and Parsons: Fielding's Case Against the Learned Professions," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, IX (Spring, 1967), 71.

[51] Hatfield, Language of Irony, p. 133.

Chapter IV

[1] Jenkins, p. 42.

[2] Battestin, "Introduction," p. xxxi.

[3] Dobson, p. 106.

[4] Godden, p. 129.

[5] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 54-55.

[6] Digeon, p. 75.

[7] Godden, p. 129.

[8] Spilka, p. 14.

[9] Wright, p. 26.

[10] Cross, p. 337.

[11] Paulson, p. 120.

[12] Dudden, p. 357.

[13] Spilka, p. 13.

[14] Maynard Mack, "Joseph Andrews and Pamela," Fielding: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ronald Paulson (Englewood Cliffs, 1962), p. 55.

[15] Battestin, "Introduction," p. xxvi.

[16] Dick Taylor, Jr., "Joseph as Hero in Joseph Andrews," Tulane Studies in English, VII (1957), 103.

[17] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 111.

Chapter IV
(Continued)

[18] Taylor, p. 100.

[19] Golden, p. 54.

[20] Taylor, p. 97.

[21] Johnson, p. 70.

[22] Paulson, p. 238.

[23] Reid, p. 582.

[24] Godden, p. 130.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Spilka, pp. 11-19.

[27] Golden, p. 54.

[28] Johnson, p. 56.

[29] Dudden, p. 369.

[30] Irwin, p. 68.

[31] Reid, p. 65.

[32] Bissell, p. 69.

[33] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 111.

[34] Hatfield, Language of Irony, p. 174.

[35] Reid, p. 77.

[36] I. B. Cauthen, Jr., "Fielding's Digressions in Joseph Andrews," College English, XVII (April, 1956), 381.

[37] Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 91.

[38] Ibid., pp. 44 and 93.

[39] Ibid., pp. 88, 89 and 126.

[40] Ibid., p. 128.

Chapter V

1 Wright, p. 148.

2 Ibid., pp. 30 and 67.

3 Johnson, p. 69.

4 Hatfield, Language of Irony, pp. 173-174.

5 Battestin, Moral Basis, p. 120.

6 Didgeon, p. 84.

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